WINTER / 2024

Launch.

A Washtenaw Community College Publication

YES! YOU CAN AFFORD COLLEGE!

RECONNECT EXPANDS

The Michigan Reconnect Scholarship helps students 21+ fulfill dreams.

SCHOLARSHIPS ON THE RISE

Learn more about the increasing number of scholarships available to you!

ALUMNI SUCCESS STORIES

What do you call someone who went to WCC? *Employed!* ©

Washtenaw Community College

LAUNCH WINTER **2024**

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Letter from the President

Greetings!

Washtenaw Community College's low tuition, numerous scholarships and transferability combine to offer a smart and affordable choice for students who want to pursue a college education.

Whether you're about to graduate from high school or are an adult learner seeking to pivot careers, chances are there is a scholarship for you.

The number of scholarships through the State of Michigan alone is significantly on the rise, with a nearly **80%** increase in awards to WCC students attributed largely to the Reconnect and Futures for Frontliners scholarships.

This year, the state launched the Michigan Achievement Scholarship, which offers up to **$2,750** per year for eligible graduating high school students. This amount covers almost the entire annual tuition for a WCC student taking a full-time load.

In addition to the state's generous scholarships, the college and external sources offer plenty of financial support to help students achieve their career goals. For example, **$16 million** in grants were awarded to WCC students last year.

All you need to do is apply! It's easy – let our Financial Aid Office guide you through every step.

I look forward to seeing you on campus this Winter!

With warm regards,

Rose B. Bellanca, Ed.D.

Rose B. Bellanca, Ed.D., President
Washtenaw Community College

ENROLL NOW FOR WINTER!

Flexible Class Schedule!

Visit **wccnet.edu/enroll** for the full list of programs and to learn more.

140 PROGRAMS ★ 50 100% ONLINE ★

BROADCAST, COMMUNICATION, VISUAL, DIGITAL & FINE ARTS

BROADCAST & COMMUNICATION

- Audio Production and Engineering
- Broadcast Media Arts
- Journalism
- Technical Communication

DIGITAL ARTS

- 3D Animation
- Animation for Film and Broadcast
- Animation for Game Art
- Client-side Web Developer
- Digital Media Arts
- Digital Video Production
- Interface Designer
- Server-side Web Developer
- User Experience Designer
- Web Design and Development

VISUAL, FINE & PERFORMING ARTS

- Arts Management
- Digital Photography
- Fine Arts
- Fine and Performing Arts
- Global Studies
- Graphic Design
- Photographic Technology
- Portrait Photography
- Traditional Photography

BUSINESS

BUSINESS

- Accounting
- Accounting for Business
- Administrative Assistant
- Business Administration—Transfer Pathway
- Business Enterprise
- Business Office Administration
- Computer Software Applications
- Core Business Skills
- Digital Business Marketing and Sales
- Entrepreneurship Essentials
- Entrepreneurship Innovation
- HR Essentials
- HR Skills and Operations Management
- Occupational Studies
- Retail and Business Operations
- Retail Management
- Sports & Entertainment Management
- Supply Chain Essentials
- Supply Chain Operations
- Supply Chain Management

GENERAL STUDIES

- General Studies—Transfer Pathway
- General Studies—Employment Pathway

HEALTH SCIENCES

DENTAL

- Dental Assisting

IMAGING

- Computed Tomography (CT)
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Mammography
- Radiography

NURSING

- Nursing Assistant
- LPN to RN
- RN

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

- Cardiac Telemetry Technician
- Health Administration
- Health Care Foundations
- Health Program Preparation
- Medical Assisting
- Medical Billing and Coding
- Physical Therapist Assistant
- Sterile Processing
- Surgical Technology

HUMAN SERVICES, PRE-EDUCATION & PUBLIC SAFETY

HUMAN SERVICES

- Addiction Studies
- Human Services

PRE-EDUCATION

- Child Development
- Early Childhood Education
- Introduction to Elementary Education
- Secondary Education

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Criminal Justice
- Criminal Justice – Law Enforcement
- Paralegal Studies/Pre-Law
- Police Academy

LIBERAL ARTS TRANSFER

- Liberal Arts Transfer

MANUFACTURING, AUTOMOTIVE, SKILLED TRADES & CONSTRUCTION

AUTOMOTIVE

- Auto Body Repair
- Automotive Cybersecurity
- Automotive Services Technician
- Automotive Test Technician
- Custom Auto Body Fabrication and Chassis Design
- Powertrain Development Technician
- Transportation Technologies

MANUFACTURING

- Advanced Manufacturing (CNC)
- Automation Specialist
- Industrial Electronics Technology
- Mechatronics-Robotics and Automated Systems
- Robotics Technician

SKILLED TRADES & CONSTRUCTION

- Construction Management
- HVAC
- Welding & Fabrication

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, & MATH AND SCIENCE

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

- Computer Networking
- Computer Systems Technology
- Cybersecurity
- Programming in C++
- Programming in Java

ENGINEERING

- Engineering and Design Technology
- Pre-Engineering Science-Transfer

MATH AND SCIENCE

- Environmental Science
- Exercise Science
- General Studies in Math and Natural Sciences
- Math and Science
  - Biology/Pre-Medicine
  - Chemistry/Pre-Medicine
  - Mathematics
  - Pre-Actuarial Science
  - Pre-Pharmacy

APPRENTICESHIP & UNION TRADES

- Apprenticeship Completion
- Construction Supervision
- Industrial Training
- Ironworkers Pre-Apprenticeship
- Journeyman Industrial

STUDENT SUCCESS GUARANTEE

To learn more about our Student Success Guarantee, visit **wccnet.edu/guarantee**

Yes! You can a

Fear of debt and the ability to afford college continue to be major concerns for students, their parents and adult learners seeking to expand their education to support their career goals. But at Washtenaw Community College financial aid awards are on the rise, allowing students to chase their dreams and avoid the college debt trap.

Whether it's the expansion of the Michigan Reconnect Scholarship to provide tuition assistance to eligible 21- to 24-year-olds, the new Michigan Achievement Scholarship beginning with 2023 high school graduates or the myriad other types of awards available, chances are there is a scholarship for you.

In fact, more than a third of WCC students, 36% in the 2021-2022 academic year, received some type of financial assistance.

The dollars awarded make WCC's already low tuition – the lowest in the state – even more affordable.

The State of Michigan is behind the largest area of increase. Specifically, the number of WCC Michigan Reconnect scholarship recipients rose by **598** compared to the previous year. Overall, the **$3.7 million** in state awards jumped by nearly 80% from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022. The new Michigan Achievement Scholarship may cover up to **$2,750** each year in tuition for eligible students.

Other state scholarships include:

- **Futures for Frontliners**
- **Tuition Incentive Plan**
- **Michigan Competitive Scholarship**
- **Fostering Futures & Board of Nursing**

Each year WCC awards several types of prestigious full-tuition honors scholarships to graduating high school students, the President's, Procassini and Excellence scholarships. The college also awards full-tuition scholarships for students enrolled in each academic division. In all during the 2021-2022 year, students received **$812,785** directly from the college.

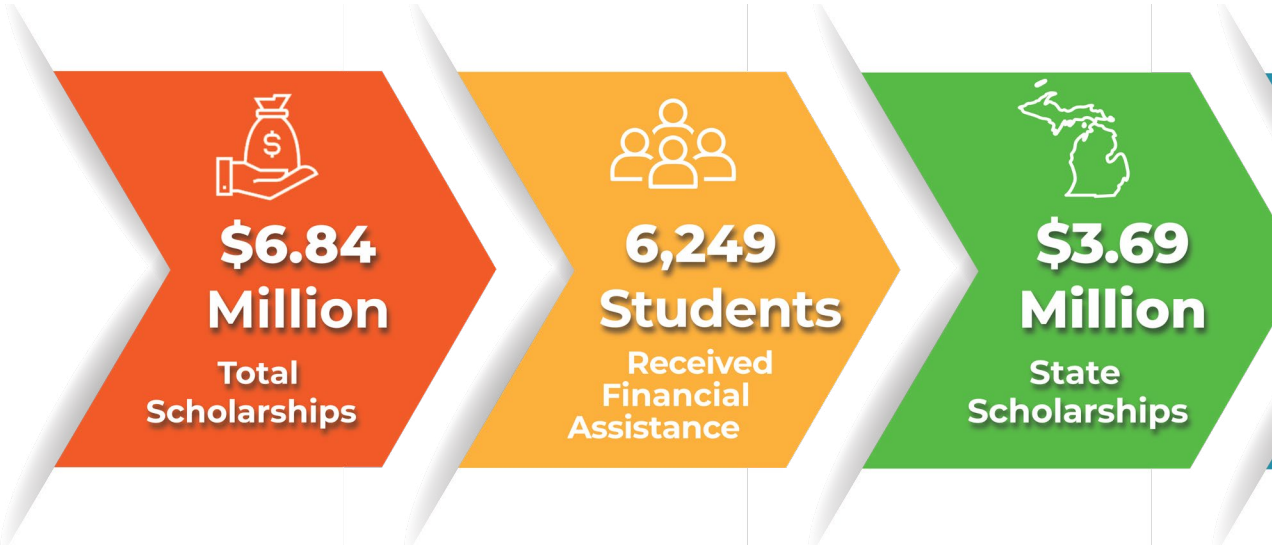
Scholarships are awarded based on both need and merit.

The WCC Foundation also awarded **$1.3 million** to students last year, a **50%** increase compared to five years ago. Foundation scholarships include:

- WCC Foundation Scholarship
- Reading Nursing Scholarship
- Morse Barker Scholarship
- Kiwanis Scholarship

Other external scholarships include STEM Scholars and Rotary awards.

Federal sources of assistance are plentiful in the form of grants and loans, which totaled **$24.9** million last year to WCC students. Of that, **$16 million** was awarded in grants, which do not need to be repaid.



fford college!

LOW TUITION & EASE OF TRANSFER

The many sources of scholarship and financial aid options coupled with WCC's low tuition and the ease of transfer to other colleges and universities help students stretch their education dollars.

The average tuition bill for full-time in-district students at WCC each semester is **$1,425**. Comparatively, one semester at four-year colleges or universities in the state can range from **$3,975-$17,736.**

WCC is the biggest producer of transfer students to the University of Michigan and offers articulation agreements with nearly 30 different colleges and universities.

FILLING THE TALENT PIPELINE

WCC's affordability enables students to target big job opportunities in critical areas.

The new Michigan Healthcare Workforce Index, for example, indicates that virtually all health care jobs will face worker shortfalls in coming years.

WCC educates and trains students for nursing, medical and dental assisting and other in-demand health care positions.

According to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, other high-demand jobs include machinists, automotive service technicians and mechanics, computer support specialists and welders – all pipelines for which WCC supplies talent.

WCC FOUNDATION HELPS STUDENTS FINISH THEIR EDUCATION

The WCC Foundation supports more than **2,000** students annually through scholarships and wrap-around services that enable them stay in school when emergencies arise.

The Student Emergency Fund helps with food insecurity; rental and utility assistance; transportation; car repairs; and books, technology and other supplies.

Research indicates that **81%** of WCC student recipients of emergency funds remain in school or graduate.

Other Foundation funding sources support parents in need of day care for their children or students with clothing limitations. Certain academic programs such as welding and nursing require protective and specialty clothing, tools and other supplies.

Students applying for scholarships are encouraged to share their stories to assure the best scholarship match. For example, some endowments may be earmarked by donors for non-traditional or first-generation students, veterans, single parents, those re-entering society following incarceration, students recovering from substance abuse, and many other scenarios and life stories.

$1.84 Million
Foundation & External Scholarships

$812,785
WCC Scholarships

Financial Assistance & Scholarships 2021-2022

Reconnect + FAME = A positive new outlook on life

Andrew Denton is on a new path to a rewarding career in the advanced manufacturing industry, and the Michigan Reconnect Scholarship, coupled with some hard work, is to thank.

"It's literally changed my life in the course of a few months," says the 32-year-old from Ypsilanti of his scholarship. "I don't know what I'd be doing right now if I hadn't gotten that."

After high school, Denton completed a couple semesters of college. But unsure of his plans, he dropped out to work various jobs, including running a music recording studio.

"I was bouncing around to a lot of different jobs. The music recording studio was a passion project but didn't pay all of my bills," he says. "I was tired of getting stuck at low pay, working hard with no promotions or raises. I realized I needed to do something and get paid for a skill."

Denton considered becoming an electrician, but returning to college would have been unlikely.

OPENING DOORS

The Reconnect scholarship opened the door for him. "I thought school was out for me, so this scholarship was a huge deal. I wouldn't have had the money to pay for it otherwise," Denton says.

The Reconnect program was introduced during COVID-19 to help adults return to college to earn a degree and better their quality of life. According to the state, **75%** of Michigan jobs in the future will require an education beyond high school, and individuals who have a two-year degree can earn **$7,500** more annually.

As of Fall 2023, nearly **3,500** students have enrolled at WCC with **Reconnect** funding.

PAID APPRENTICESHIPS

After enrolling at WCC, one of his instructors encouraged Denton to apply for the new **FAME** work-and-learn apprenticeship program. FAME is an acronym for the national Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education program offering college students on-the-job training while they're in school.

WCC leads as the only higher education FAME institution in the state. Industry partners are anchor Toyota Motor North America, as well as Orbitform, Novi Precision, Lomar Machine & Tool Company and Caster Concepts.

At WCC, Denton is pursuing an Associate in Applied Science in Mechatronics-Robotics and Automated Systems. Mechatronics is a multi-disciplinary field that involves robotics and automated systems to develop skills for the advanced manufacturing industry.

Denton committed to the 18-month FAME program, which set him up with a 30-hour a week paid internship at Orbitform in Jackson. He works three days a week and is on campus for classes two days a week. The days are long and full, but well worth it, he says.

"It's pretty cool because I'm learning a lot. You learn things at school and then you go to work the next day and you see that very thing happening on the job. I never really felt invested in my earlier jobs; it was just a means to an end. But here I want to go to work and do a good job," he says.

He can see himself staying with Orbitform after the apprenticeship or possibly transferring to a four-year college or university to pursue an electrical engineering degree.

Denton credits his WCC instructors and fellow students for his successes in a supportive environment.

"The instructors are very good teachers and always there if you have questions. They told us when we started that the teachers are here because they want to be here. If they wanted, they could probably go work in their field and make double, but they are here because they care," Denton says.

> "I thought school was out for me, so this scholarship was a huge deal. I wouldn't have had the money to pay for it otherwise."

MICHIGAN RECONNECT SCHOLARSHIP EXPANDS TO INCLUDE 21+

The Michigan Reconnect Scholarship program designed to help people move beyond socio and economic barriers is expanding its reach to help even more students obtain a college education.

Key changes in the program, which pays in-district tuition rates at community colleges throughout the state, have lowered the minimum age from 25 to 21 and now allow current students to become eligible.

These students must be enrolled at WCC and begin coursework by the Fall 2024.

The changes aim to attract even more students to community colleges to earn an education and increase prosperity.

Since the program launched in 2021, about 123,000 Michigan residents have been accepted into the Reconnect program with 27,000 enrolled at a community college.

To be eligible, students must:

- **Be at least 21 when they apply.**
- **Have lived in Michigan for a year or more.**
- **Have a high school diploma or equivalent.**
- **Have not yet completed a college degree (associate or bachelor's).**

Learn more about the **Michigan Reconnect Scholarship** on the WCC website at: **wccnet.edu/reconnect.**

Part of the process requires filling out a **FAFSA** form for federal student aid.

Contact WCC's Financial Aid Office at **finaid@wccnet.edu** or **734-973-3523** for assistance.

Serving Those Who Serve Us

Scholarships + Low Tuition Help Vets Save GI Bill for Transfer School

His time in the Army National Guard and deployment to Dubai helped veteran James-Cameron Chenault find his purpose – to serve his community no matter where he is placed.

Now 30, Chenault is enrolled at Washtenaw Community College thanks to a **Divisional Scholarship** through the Health Sciences Division and will begin the Registered Nursing program with the Winter 2024 cohort.

A Divisional Scholarship covers a student's full in-district tuition and up to **$300** in books each semester. At **$99** per credit for in-district students WCC's tuition is already among the lowest in the state.

He's thankful for the scholarship because it means he can save the benefits from his GI Bill and apply them to higher-priced tuition at a four-year university when he transfers for a bachelor's degree in nursing.

Chenault started his higher education career more than 10 years ago between serving two stints in the Army National Guard.

He had heard about the Health Sciences Division scholarship in the student e-newsletter and was impressed with the ease of the application process. Each of WCC's academic divisions offer Divisional Scholarships to fully cover Fall and Winter tuition for current students who are Washtenaw County residents with at least 30 credits and a 3.3 grade point average.

His advice for students considering applying for scholarships? *"Do not be intimidated by the requirements. You have done something outstanding in your life, and you have a story to tell. Do not get discouraged; just apply for it!"*

Chenault applauds WCC for its welcoming and safe environment and says the college's Wadhams Veterans Center has been an outstanding resource for him and his fellow veterans.

After Chenault completes his nursing degree at WCC, his goal is to work at the Ann Arbor VA Hospital or Michigan Medicine as a labor and delivery or cardiac nurse.

DIVISIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

WCC pays full tuition plus $300 in books for recipients of Divisional Scholarships from five academic divisions. Contact the Office of Financial Aid at **734-973-3523** or email **finaid@wccnet.edu** and apply by **May 10**!

From Football Fields to Auto Bays

Procassini Honor Scholarship Attracts Top High School Graduates

Recent Skyline High School graduate Mustafa Alhefady has tinkered around on cars since seventh grade. What started as a hobby with his dad has turned into a promising career path. After researching top automotive technician programs, he decided to pursue his education at WCC and enrolled this Fall.

With help from the Procassini Honors Scholarship, the 2023 high school graduate is on his way to a world of opportunities in the fast-changing auto industry.

The scholarship is based on academic achievements or outstanding accomplishments in high school.

Alhefady participated in the competitive business magnet program at Skyline and was a four-year member of the football team, serving as captain his senior year.

His Procassini scholarship pays full tuition for the Fall and Winter semesters, as well as **$300** in textbooks each semester. The award may be renewed in full for a second year if academic criteria are met.

The Procassini is among three types of honor scholarships WCC bestows upon graduates from Washtenaw County high schools. The Procassini and the President's Honor scholarships are typically presented to six students from the larger schools. Fifty Excellence Scholarships are awarded each year worth **$3,000** for the Fall and Winter semesters.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, WCC awarded a total of **$812,785** in scholarships, including **$496,562** to recent high school graduates.

"I'm thankful for the Procassini Scholarship because it pays my tuition in full and even covers books. This saves my family a lot of money and sets me up for learning more about a career I already know I'm going to love," Alhefady says.

Alhefady was drawn to WCC for its reputation in the community, welcoming faculty and staff, and proximity to home.

He initially enrolled to complete the Automotive Services Technician certificate but has been inspired to complete an Associate in Applied Sciences Degree - Transportation Technologies. He sees himself working at a dealership after he graduates and plans to one day open his own shop with his friends who have also attended WCC.

> "I'm thankful for the Procassini Scholarship because it pays my tuition in full and even covers books."

What Do You Call Someone W

AFFORDABLE RX TO CRITICAL NURSING SHORTAGE

Meet Ana Andrade

How Ana Andrade arrived in Michigan from Brazil in 2018, speaking very little English at the time and today is a nurse at Detroit Medical Center in a Medical Surgery Cardiac unit, is a story of perseverance and perspective.

"I'm very proud of my story. If I can do it, anyone can do it," Andrade says. "I felt like I had a gift and I knew I needed to use it to help others. My journey has been worth it because I love taking care of people – even those you don't know. Sometimes it's just listening to them."

Andrade first attended Washtenaw Community College to participate in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. After successfully completing the ESL program, she moved on to the Health Program Preparation track and then enrolled in the nursing program. She graduated with an Associate Degree in Nursing from WCC in May of 2023.

Her first year at WCC was pivotal. Immersed in a welcoming environment, the ESL program helped her navigate learning a new language and instilled confidence to continue pursuing her dreams.

Andrade connected with instructor Betsy Foss, who taught grammar and writing to ESL students. Foss reminded Andrade that her dreams are worth pursuing. "She's so patient and dedicated and positive. I didn't know any English at the time, and she was there for me."

Walking across the stage to receive her hard-earned diploma marked the culmination of years of hard work and the launch of her new career. "It was one of the best days of my life. My family and friends were there, and it's just unbelievable to have them be so proud of you."

Andrade's circle of influence is wide, but it's the home front – where her husband and 9-year-old daughter are her biggest cheerleaders – that means so much. "My daughter tells me she's going to go to WCC, too. I just tell her 'Yes, yes you can.'"

The college's exceptional educational programs and low tuition is a combination that can't be beat, especially for prospective nurses. WCC was recently named a national Center of Excellence in Nursing Education by the National League for Nursing, the only community college and one of just nine nursing programs nationwide this year.

"The instructors look for a better way to deliver the content and share knowledge with students. As soon as the hospital or medical facility know you graduated from WCC, they understand you are well-prepared and have 'hands on' practice and experience," Andrade says.

While tuition is the lowest in the state for in-district students, Andrade made her college education even more affordable by enrolling in many of WCC's courses offering free online textbooks and worked part-time as a lab assistant in the nursing program.

"Most schools that offer the quality of education that WCC does are very expensive. I'm thankful for the opportunity to get a top education affordably," she says.

> "As soon as the hospital or medical facility know you graduated from WCC, they understand you are well-prepared."

ho Went to WCC? *Employed.*©

FINE-TUNING CAREER PATH IN ADVANCED MANUFACTURING PROGRAM

Meet Felipe Agurto

Like many people, Felipe Agurto wandered along life's path for a while before finding the right direction for his career.

After graduating from high school on the west side of the state, Agurto enrolled in the University of Michigan's College of Engineering but soon discovered it wasn't really what he wanted to do.

"I initially wanted to become an aerospace engineer and work on designing airplanes. That eventually transitioned to being more interested in designing extraterrestrial vehicles, like rovers and whatnot," says Agurto, now 29.

After some introspection, he left U-M in 2017 and struck out on a journey of discovery, working in a variety of industries before refocusing on his formal education at Washtenaw Community College in 2019. At WCC, he recently earned an Associate in Advanced Manufacturing Degree with a Numerical Control concentration.

Agurto joined **ZOLLER, Inc.** — a German based precision tool presetting company with its U.S. headquarters in Ann Arbor — in May to support the company's Tool Management Solutions product. ZOLLER has donated nearly **$250,000** in equipment to WCC to train students on state-of-the-art machinery and has launched a robust apprenticeship program.

"The job is lots of quick thinking and problem solving, which keeps me on my toes," Agurto says.

He connected with ZOLLER at one of WCC's career fairs and used the college's services at its Center for Career Success to fine-tune his resume and other presentation materials. Agurto also consulted with WCC's Financial Aid Office to get a Michigan Reconnect Scholarship that he used to pay for tuition and fees.

"I feel the biggest advantage about the WCC program was the exposure to several aspects of manufacturing. I specialized in machining and CNC (Computer Numerical Control), but robot programming, fluid power and PLCs (Programmable Logic Controller) were all included in my education. Ultimately, this gave me the flexibility to conduct a wide job search across multiple disciplines."

Keeping his options open is a result of the credentials he received from WCC as well as a key factor in his future planning.

"My ultimate dream career goal is up in the air. There's still so much I don't know about the manufacturing world, and there are countless directions my career can go."

CENTER FOR CAREER SUCCESS

Let WCC's Center for Career Success help you put your best foot forward and find your dream job! Visit room 112 of the Student Center, call **734-677-5155** or email: **careers@wccnet.edu**.

> The biggest advantage about the WCC program was the exposure to several aspects of manufacturing."

VETERAN ALUMNUS HELPS ADVANCE THE SAFETY OF INTELLIGENT VEHICLES

Meet Mike Rudisill

Mike Rudisill played the long game when it came to his education at Washtenaw Community College. He showed up, stayed late, listened, studied and connected with his instructors.

Today, he leads a team at an innovative tech company which focuses on future vehicle technology – from smart infrastructure, to autonomous vehicles, to driver experiences.

"Whether it's a 3D printed camera mount, milling a custom electrical enclosure to survive the elements, or tube bending and welding an entire vehicle frame then producing carbon fiber body panels, I get to lead the charge in the fabrication of it all," says Rudisill, an engineering technician at Quantum Signal AI, a Ford subsidiary, in Saline.

After time in the Marines and a series of post-service career starts, he credits WCC with guiding him to his new vocation and preparing him for success.

Rudisill, 33, was raised in a family of general contractors. After high school, he enlisted in the Marines, where he worked as an intelligence analyst. After the Marines, he tried several different career paths then hit a fork in the road.

Looking for solid direction for his future, Rudisill decided it was time to head to WCC. At first he planned to study welding, but after a semester, the robotics/mechatronics program caught his eye. "I love building things, love the idea of designing, love technical challenges. But I also just love working with my hands, and this field in general allows me to do all of that," says Rudisill, who earned an associate degree in Mechatronics, with focus/certification in Computer Numerical Control (CNC), Computer-Aided Design (CAD) and Computer-Aided Manufacturing (CAM).

Rudisill maximized his time and opportunities, talking with instructors, helping others and playing with robots in the lab. The conversations and connections proved valuable.

"The compound effect of extra experience and repetition of practicing what we were learning helped me get more out of it," he says.

"That's how I got hired at this job. The CEO came to WCC and wanted to talk to instructors and get a short list of students."

Rudisill was hired to expand Quantum's internal fabrication/prototyping. In the four years since he arrived, the company has added numerous machines and tools. Rudisill programs, operates and maintains each one.

It all started with a good education.

"Day three in class, we're out there with robots. Nothing beats the hands-on experience," he says, adding that instructors work hard to provide a broad, deep knowledge base for students.

"That's how I got hired at this job. The CEO came to WCC and wanted to talk to instructors and get a short list of students."

Foundation Scholarship

A WCC EDUCATION IMPACTS GENERATIONS

Meet Lauren Alexander

Early on, Lauren Alexander knew she wanted to be a teacher.

"When I was younger, school did not come easy for me. I had to work harder than my peers to understand what we were learning. I knew I wanted to be a teacher so that I could help my students who struggle," Alexander says.

Today, she's doing exactly that as a kindergarten teacher at Manor Elementary in Monroe.

"Being a teacher was always my dream job. I knew from when I was young that teaching was what I wanted to do. I could not love my school or the people I work with more. It is my calling, and I am so glad that I chose to go down this path," says Alexander, 25, who is in her second year at Manor.

Washtenaw Community College helped her along.

After graduating from Saline High School, Alexander began the pursuit of her dream at WCC. She earned an Associate in Arts in Elementary Education Degree and a Liberal Arts Certificate before transferring to Eastern Michigan University to complete her bachelor's.

She graduated from EMU in 2022 with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education as well as a Reading Comprehensive Certificate.

"Attending WCC was the best decision I could have ever made. It was a fantastic stepping stone from high school to college," says Alexander, who points to caring and attentive instructors as making a big impact on her life.

Alexander says WCC's smaller class sizes made it easier to get support from instructors when she needed it. And she credits faculty members for their caring approach.

"They truly want you to succeed. Being an educator myself, I know how important it is to build relationships with students. I loved a lot of my instructors but a few that always stood out are Hava Levitt-Phillips, Nichole and Bobby Klemmer, and Mary Mullolond. They took a genuine interest in my learning and my life," she says.

"I can still say they are some of my biggest inspirations. They made my experience at WCC worthwhile and made me feel like I belonged."

Alexander is an enthusiastic proponent of attending WCC as a first step in a person's journey to acquire college degrees, especially the financial benefits.

"I was one of six students at different high schools in Washtenaw County to receive the scholarship, which was a full ride for two years of my associate program. I was so honored to receive this gift."

"This is one example of the many scholarship opportunities that students can receive when attending WCC. Starting out my college career at WCC helped to ensure my success after graduating."

> "Attending WCC was the best decision I could have ever made. It was a fantastic stepping stone from high school to college."

EMPLOYED

GRAPHIC DESIGNER SEES BRIGHT FUTURE

Meet Liz DeRensis

Her Washtenaw Community College instructors called her an ideal student – positive, hard-working, focused, and exceptionally open to feedback.

That's why it was no surprise when Liz DeRensis, armed with an Associate in Applied Science-Graphic Design and Technologies from WCC, landed a job as the graphic designer for **SEE Eyewear.**

> **"I'm really glad I picked WCC because having come from another community college, I recognized that smaller school atmosphere."**

DeRensis, who transferred to WCC from a two-year college in New Jersey in 2019, said she clicked immediately with her new college home.

"It was a great experience," she says, thinking back to her first meetings with graphic design faculty member Ingrid Ankerson. "She was so caring and wanted all her students to succeed," DeRensis says, adding that the faculty at WCC is one of its greatest strengths.

AFFORDABLE

She knew exactly what she was looking for when she chose to enroll at WCC.

"I wanted a program that was not only not going to cost me $100,000 but was specialized and would help me get a job," she says. That's exactly what happened.

DeRensis graduated from WCC in May of 2020 and has been working for SEE Eyewear since 2021.

She is the Creative Content Specialist, which means she has a wide variety of roles in her day-to-day work. She designs all marketing materials, such as in-store signage, email campaigns, digital advertisements and more, writes marketing copy, including monthly e-commerce product descriptions, and runs the company's social media platforms. And that's just scraping the surface.

"It's a wide range of responsibilities," she says, including the opportunity to develop her design capabilities and learn more about marketing. "I love my job. As a designer, to see your work in stores across the country is really rewarding."

Not a day goes by that DeRensis doesn't use skills learned in her WCC classes.

There's another reason she lauds her WCC education – it didn't cost her a fortune.

EASY TRANSFER

"It was scary to transfer," she says, but as she considered transferring to a university or WCC, the price tag won her over. *"WCC accepted all of my credits, so I just had to take my design classes when I came."*

It took her only a year and a half to finish. It would have taken three and a half years to finish the same degree at the university she considered.

"I'm really glad I picked WCC because having come from another community college, I recognized that smaller school atmosphere," she says. "I came, and the chair of the department personally welcomed me. That's worth a lot to me."

DeRensis is just getting her feet wet. "I'm getting a lot of great experience, and someday I'd love to head up a department or serve as an art director. I would feel confident going into that," she says.

ENROLL NOW FOR WINTER 2024

How To Get Started at WCC

APPLY TO WCC. IT'S FREE!

Applying is free and only takes **10 to 15 minutes.**

wccnet.edu/apply

MEET WITH AN ACADEMIC ADVISOR

WCC advisors can help you select a major and plan your class schedule. **Call 734-677-5102** or contact the Student Welcome Center.

wccnet.edu/advising

TIPS TO HELP YOU REGISTER!

Log into **wccnet.edu/mywcc,** click on Student Services, then Registration. You will be able to:

- Check your course prerequisites
- See if there are any holds on your account
- Register for classes

IMPORTANT DATES

WINTER SESSIONS

Session I, January 8
Session II, January 30
Session III, February 13
Session IV, February 29

On Campus & Online!
wccnet.edu

Washtenaw Community College
4800 East Huron Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-4800

What Do You Call Someone Who Went to WCC? *Employed.*©

Quality Program Specialist,
American Society of Clinical Oncology

From WCC to Washington, D.C., **Michael Eisinger's** education pathway and expertise in project management, public speaking, technology platforms and trauma intervention have taken him a lot of places.

After completing his liberal arts studies at WCC, Eisinger graduated from Eastern Michigan University (B.A., English Language and Literature) and West Chester University of Pennsylvania (M.A., Holocaust and Genocide Studies). He now runs the Quality Training Program for the American Society of Clinical Oncology, where his passion, skills and ability to leverage technology contribute to growth and impact for oncology teams.

He previously managed a transformative $17 million grant at the Jewish Federations of North America's Center for Advancing Holocaust Survivor Care. Through his leadership, the program expanded and distributed funding to subgrantees across the country, providing support to 15,000 survivors as they age in place.

At West Chester, he participated in international academic and research programs and became a sought-after speaker at conferences, seminars, and symposiums worldwide.

Enroll today for Winter | wccnet.edu/enroll

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The Student-Right-to-Know and The Crime Awareness & Campus Security Act of 1990 (also known as the Clery Act) requires institutions to disclose information about graduation rates, crime statistics, and security information to current and prospective students. Individuals interested in obtaining this type of information should contact the Dean of Students office at 734-973-3328.